

Current Issues

in North American Studies and Cultural Studies
Lecture Series | Winter Term 2015-2016

**NORTH
AMERICAN
STUDIES
PROGRAM**

Prof. Dr. Hubert Zapf
Universität Augsburg

universität**bonn**

“Cultural Ecology and the Transdisciplinary Knowledge of Literature”

Tuesday, December 8, 2015 | 6:00–8:00 pm
Room A, IAAK, Regina-Pacis-Weg 5



In recent ecocritical thought, the question of the relationship between literature and knowledge has gained new urgency: Calls for an all-encompassing “unity” of knowledge as a form of cross-disciplinary “consilience” (E. O. Wilson) are countered by opposite claims of a vital diversity of functionally different and epistemologically complementary cultures of knowledge. In the perspective of cultural ecology, it is the double orientation on the poles of connectivity *and* diversity which constitutes a space of transdisciplinary knowledge that is a special domain and potential of imaginative literature. Literary stagings of human existence provide a testing-ground for literary and cultural theory, but they are also important sources of knowledge in their own right.

Hubert Zapf is Professor and Chair of American Literature at the University of Augsburg. His numerous publications include *Literatur als kulturelle Ökologie* (2002), *Amerikanische Literaturgeschichte* (3rd ed. 2010), and *American Studies Today* (ed. with Sabine Sielke et al. 2014). Two volumes are forthcoming in 2016: *Literature as Cultural Ecology* (Bloomsbury) and the *Handbook of Ecocriticism and Cultural Ecology* (De Gruyter).